

we have to keep making progress for the American people. I would remind you that we have before the Congress right now—just two things that I'd like to emphasize: number one, legislation, fully funded, within the balanced budget bill, to get rid of the backlog in the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and otherwise enforce the anti-discrimination laws of the country. I think that is very important; number two, we have an empowerment agenda put together by the Vice President and Secretary Cuomo, and an education component put together by Secretary Riley to create affirmative economic and educational opportunities in distressed inner-city and isolated rural areas that are predominantly minority.

Both those are not particularly costly. Both those could be passed by this Congress in the next 2 weeks. Both those would actually do something for the American people that live beyond the borders of the Federal establishment here, and I very much hope they will pass.

But I expect this to be a central part of the work I do in the next 2 years. I expect this to be a central part of the work I do for the rest of my life. I think in the 21st century—when you go back to World War II, and you think about the part of the Nazi experience that was directed against the Jews, and you look all the way through the ensuing years, all the way to the end of this century, down to what we've seen in Rwanda, the Middle East, Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo, you name it, it will be incumbent upon the United States to be a force for tolerance and racial reconciliation for the foreseeable future.

So this is just simply a phase of this work that is coming to an end, and I think you should see it as a springboard, both in the recommendations the advisory commission will make and in the document that I will put out after that.

Q. So could there be a council on race?

President Clinton. I understand they may recommend that, and if they do, of course, I will take it very seriously.

President Havel. One of my whole life personal ideals is ideal of a civic society. I must tell you that America—and America especially in time of President Clinton, because

this is the America I know the best—is for my work, for my support of civic society, a big inspiration.

Thank you.

President Clinton. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President's 164th news conference began at 3:13 p.m. in the Dean Acheson Auditorium at the State Department. During the later portion of the news conference, President Havel spoke in Czech, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. In his remarks, President Clinton referred to Minister of Foreign Affairs Jan Kavan, Minister of Defense Vladimir Vetchy, and Prime Minister Milos Zeman of the Czech Republic; Josef Tosovsky, Chairman, Czech National Bank; President Ernesto Zedillo of Mexico; President Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil; Prime Minister Jean Chretien of Canada; President Jacques Chirac of France; Christopher R. Hill, U.S. Ambassador to the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; and President Slobodan Milosevic of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). President Havel referred to St. Louis Cardinals first baseman Mark McGwire and Chicago Cubs outfielder Sammy Sosa, who broke Major League Baseball's single-season home run record.

Proclamation 7123—Citizenship Day and Constitution Week, 1998

September 16, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Two hundred eleven years ago, on September 17, 1787, our Nation's Founders signed the Constitution that established our system of government. This extraordinary document, the product of passionate debate and grudging compromise, was crafted by a handful of individuals in the late 18th century; yet it has safely charted America's course through more than two centuries of enormous change and growth and has served as the model for democratic governments around the globe.

The United States Constitution has endured in large part because of its remarkable fairness and flexibility. It created an inspired balance of powers and responsibilities among the executive, legislative, and judicial

branches of government and among the Federal Government, the States, and individual citizens. It also provided for a system of amendment that allows our democracy to correct past errors and omissions and to respond to new challenges. As we mark this anniversary of the signing of the Constitution, we celebrate the effort, the dedication, and the wisdom of our Founders and the blessings of liberty that resulted from their labors.

We also celebrate those who have struggled to move America closer to fulfilling the first and fundamental purpose expressed in the Constitution: “. . . to form a more perfect Union.” Among these heroes were the thousands who fought and died during the Civil War to keep our Nation united and to banish slavery from our land. The 13th Amendment to the Constitution is the fruit of their sacrifice: “Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude . . . shall exist within the United States.” The courageous women and men who met at Seneca Falls, New York, 150 years ago also set the highest standards of citizenship. Recognizing that women, too, are entitled to share in America’s promise of equality, they began a crusade that resulted in the ratification of the 19th Amendment, guaranteeing women the right to vote. Likewise, we honor American citizens of our century, black and white, who worked together, faced danger together, and sometimes died together in the struggle to end racial injustice in our society and move our Nation closer to the constitutional ideal of equality under the law. The 24th Amendment, guaranteeing all citizens the right to vote, reflects their spirit and commitment to true democracy.

As we seek to form a more perfect union at home, we also bear the responsibilities of citizenship in our world community. Throughout our history, we have sought to secure the blessings of liberty not only for ourselves, but for all people everywhere. We remember the Americans who fought two world wars against tyranny and oppression and who triumphed in the Cold War through faith in the promise of democracy. These men and women cared so intensely about our Nation and their fellow human beings that they were willing to forgo their own comfort

and sometimes even to sacrifice their own lives for the ideal of freedom envisioned by our Founders.

In commemoration of the signing of the Constitution and in recognition of the importance of active, responsible citizenship in preserving the Constitution’s blessings for our Nation, the Congress, by joint resolution of February 29, 1952 (36 U.S.C. 153), designated September 17 as “Citizenship Day,” and by joint resolution of August 2, 1956 (36 U.S.C. 159), requested that the President proclaim the week beginning September 17 and ending September 23 of each year as “Constitution Week.”

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 17, 1998, as Citizenship Day and September 17 through September 23, 1998, as Constitution Week. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials, as well as leaders of civic, educational, and religious organizations, to conduct meaningful ceremonies and programs in our schools, houses of worship, and other community centers to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the Constitution and the rights and duties of citizenship.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this sixteenth day of September, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-third.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., September 18, 1998]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on September 21.

**Message to the Congress
Transmitting a Report of the
Commodity Credit Corporation
September 16, 1998**

To the Congress of the United States:

As required by the provisions of section 13, Public Law 806, 80th Congress (15 U.S.C. 714k), I transmit herewith the report